(b) how many kilometers of double line has been laid by December, 2001; and

(c) the time likely to be taken to lay double line in the remaining part?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) The total length of Ghaziabad-Moradabad section is 141 Kms. No foundation stone was laid for doubling of this work. However, the work of Ghaziabad-Hapur doubling Phase-I (37 Kms) was sanctioned in the year 1995-96. Subsequently, the work of Moradabad-Amroha and Amroha-Kankather has also been sanctioned and work is in progress. The work of Hapur-Kankather doubling is yet to be sanctioned.

(b) 37 Kms of double line from Ghaziabad to Hapur has been commissioned as on December, 2001.

(c) No target date has been fixed as yet.

Railway projects in Iraq

4038. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects which were to be executed by the Railways in Iraq in 2001-2002;

(b) the number of projects pending at the stage of negotiations with the Government of Iraq;

(c) the action being taken by the Railways for completion of projects and the details of negotiations going on;

(d) whether it is a fact that Railways have decided to stop executing all the projects, till the situation in the Gulf dissipated; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Nil.

(b) and (c) Priced offer have been submitted by KRCL for two projects. However, no negotiations with Govt. of Iraq have been held so far. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has also been signed Government of Iraq

covering various aspects of cooperation in Railway Sectors such as new Railway projects, Sky bus Metro, Sleeper Factory, Exchange of expertise and training, supply of services, materials and equipments etc.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Operating Cost of Railways

†4039. SHRI RAM JETHALMANI:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the operating cost of the Railways is increasing continuously for the last few years;

(b) if so, what has been the annual growth rate in the operating cost during the decade of nineties;

(c) whether there is a difference in operating cost for freight and passengers carried by the trains, and

(d) if so, what is the average difference and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) The total working expenses, which cover the operation and maintenance of the railways, have been increasing continuously for the last few years. The increase has been higher during the years of implementation of the recommendation of the Vth Central Pay Commission.

(b) The average annual growth rate during the decade of the nineties has been around 12%.

(c) There is a difference in the working expenses of the Coaching (includes Passenger, Luggage, Catering and Parcel) and Goods services.

(d) During the decade of nineties, on an average, the Coaching services account for about 46% of the total working expenses and Goods services for 54%.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.